

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 7-14 and 22-24 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein.

Please amend Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 15, 16 and 18-21 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus comprising:
an input unit arranged to input ~~means for inputting~~ image data; and
an embedding unit arranged to embed ~~means for embedding~~ first information and second information in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing whether the first information is the latest information ~~in the image data as electronic watermark information.~~

2. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first information specifies said apparatus.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said embedding unit ~~means~~ further embeds third information and fourth information, the fourth information representing whether the third information is the latest information.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein each of the first and third information specifies said apparatus.

5. (Currently Amended) An image processing method comprising the steps of:

inputting image data; and

embedding first information and second information in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing whether the first information is the latest information ~~in the image data as electronic watermark information.~~

6. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium having a computer program code, for an image processing, comprising the procedure codes of:

an inputting process procedure code for inputting image data; and

an embedding process procedure code for embedding first information and second information in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing whether the first information is the latest information ~~in the image data as electronic watermark information.~~

7-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus comprising:

an input unit arranged to input ~~means for inputting~~ image data having a plurality of color components; and

an embedding unit arranged to embed ~~means for embedding~~ first information and second information in at least one of the plurality of color components in the image

data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing that the first information is the latest information ~~in at least one of the plurality of color components as electronic watermark information.~~

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein ~~said embedding means embeds, as the electronic watermark information,~~ the second information ~~representing~~ represents that ~~no latest~~ later information is not contained in a color component different from that in which the first information has been embedded.

17. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the first information is information for specifying said apparatus.

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said embedding unit means embeds the electronic watermark information as binary data in ~~binarizing~~ at least one of the plurality of color components.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said embedding unit means embeds the electronic watermark information as binary data in ~~binarizing~~ at least one of the plurality of color components by switching a the dither pattern ~~to be~~ used.

20. (Currently Amended) An image processing method comprising the steps of:

inputting image data having a plurality of color components; and

embedding first information and second information in at least one of the plurality of color components in the image data as electronic watermark information, the second information representing that the first information is the latest information ~~in at least one of the plurality of color components as electronic watermark information.~~

21. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium having a computer program code, for an image processing, comprising the procedure codes of:

an inputting process procedure code for inputting image data having a plurality of color components; and

an embedding process procedure code for embedding first information and second information in at least one of the plurality of color components in the image data as electronic watermark information, said second information representing that the first information is the latest information ~~in at least one of the plurality of color components as electronic watermark information.~~

22-24. (Cancelled)